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SW by Egypt. The country extends about 260 miles in a N/S direction and varies from 10 to 65 miles in width. The Sinai Peninsula was formerly occupied by Israel after the 1967 Six Day War until 1982. The Gaza Strip, the westernmost coastal area, is now largely administered by the Palestinian Authority.

The Dead Sea, lying on the E side of the country, is 399.9m below sea level and the lowest point on the earth's surface. The terrain consists of low, coastal plains, central mountains, and the Negev Desert in the S.

The climate is primarily temperate, although it is hot and dry in the S and E areas.

### Buoyage System

The IALA Buoyage System (Region A) is in effect. See Chart No. 1 for further IALA Buoyage System information.

### General

Israel, located in the Middle East, is bordered on the NW by the Mediterranean Sea, on the N by Lebanon, on the NE by Syria, on the SE by Jordan and the Gulf of Aqaba, and on the

## Currency

The official currency is the new Israeli shekel, consisting of 100 new agorot.

## Government



**Flag of Israel**

The State of Israel, an independent sovereign republic, was originally proclaimed in 1948. The Knesset, directly elected for a 4-year term, is a 120-member Parliament. The system of election is by proportional representation. Executive power lies in the Cabinet, headed by the Prime Minister. The President, who serves for a 5-year term, is chosen through a combination of the popular vote and election by the Knesset, and is the chief of state.

The legal system is based on English common law, British Mandate regulations, and, in personal matters, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim traditions.

The capital, as proclaimed in 1950, is Jerusalem. The United States, like nearly all other countries, does not recognize this status and maintains its Embassy in Tel Aviv.

## Holidays

The following holiday is observed:

Labor Day	May 1
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Other holidays, which are dependant on the appearance of the moon, include Passover, Independence Day, Pentecost, Rosh Hashana (Jewish New Year), Yom Kippur (Day of Atone-ment), and the Feast of the Tabernacles.

## Industries

Agriculture is an important industry. Other major industries include food processing, diamond cutting and polishing, textiles and apparel, chemicals, metal products, military and electrical equipment, potash mining, and tourism.

## Languages

The official language is Hebrew. Arabic is the official language of the Arab minority. English is also widely used.

## Regulations

### Civil Liability

From 20 February 1997, entry to the territorial waters of Israel by oil tankers will be permitted only by those holding an insurance policy covering civil liability for oil pollution damage issued by their flag state.

### Communications

Within Israeli territorial waters, all vessels are forbidden to transmit by radiotelephone or radiotelegraphy except in accordance with the following conditions:

1. Carry out communications with or through an Israeli coastal radio station on its authorized frequency of 26.96 MHz.
2. Use the minimum power possible.
3. Do not cause interference with other authorized stations.
4. Stop transmitting when requested by Israeli coastal stations.

### Pollution

In order to prevent the import of nonnative aquatic organisms into the waters of the ports of Israel from ballast water discharges, all ships destined for Israeli ports must exchange any ballast water that has not been taken on in open ocean.

The best method of protecting harbor waters from foreign organisms that may exist in the ballast water collected in foreign harbors and near-shore areas is for the ballast water to be exchanged in open ocean, beyond any continental shelf or fresh water current effect.

For vessels calling at Israeli Mediterranean ports, ballast exchange must be carried out in the Atlantic Ocean when practicable.

Vessels failing to comply with the above procedure will not be permitted to pump out their ballast water during their stay in the port or while navigating along the coast of Israel.

A record of the location, date, and time of the ballast water exchange should be entered in the ship's log book, or in other suitable documentation, such as an official ballast water record book. Masters of vessels will be requested to provide ship's inspectors (pilots) with a completed ballast water exchange report.

### Reporting

Vessels bound for Israeli ports are required to report the following information through Haifa Coast Radio (4XO) to the Israeli Ministry of Transport (IMOT) when 100 miles off the Israeli coast (50 miles for small craft), and again when 50 miles off the Israeli coast:

1. Vessel name.
2. Call sign.
3. Flag and port of registry.
4. IMO number.
5. MMSI.
6. Year when vessel was built.
7. Deadweight tonnage.
8. Vessel type and cargo on board.
9. Number of crew/passengers.
10. Agent's name, address, and telephone number.
11. Last port/previous port and date of departure.

12. Destination.
13. Present position, course, and speed..
14. ETA.

All vessels approaching the Israeli coast may also establish direct contact with the Israeli navy on VHF channel 16; however, this is not a substitute for the required report sent through Haifa Coast Radio.

Vessels which do not report according to the above IMOT procedures will not be allowed to enter any Israeli port. The IMO number and MMSI are mandatory and must be included in the above report.

All vessels entering and leaving Israeli ports and proceeding to them must do so via the recommended route and approach channels, which may best be seen on the chart.

### Time Zone

The Time Zone description is BRAVO (-2). Daylight Savings Time (CHARLIE (-3)) is maintained from the

beginning of April through the end of September; the exact changeover dates should be obtained from local authorities.

#### World Time Zone Chart

<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/ref/pdf/802801.pdf>

### U.S. Embassy

The U.S. Embassy is situated at 71 Hayarkon Street, Tel Aviv.

The mailing addresses are, as follows:

1. International mail—  
PSC 98, Box 100  
Tel Aviv
2. Diplomatic pouch—  
APO AE 09830

#### U. S. Embassy Israel Home Page

<http://www.usembassy-israel.org.il>